from time can be efficiently dispersed.

(B) Second Embodiment

Only the difference between the first embodiment and the second embodiment will be described hereinafter.

(B-1) Structure and operation of the second embodiment

Fig. 3 shows an internal structure of a fluctuation absorbing buffer device 46 provided instead of the fluctuation absorbing buffer device 16 of Fig. 2 in this embodiment.

The buffer device 46 is an element that corresponds to the buffer device 16 of the first embodiment, and the basic function thereof is the same as that of the buffer device 16.

The whole structure of a voice communications system 40 that includes a voice communications device 42 on the receiving side where the buffer device 46 is mounted is as shown in Fig. 8.

In other words, the structure of the voice communications system 40 of this embodiment is basically the same as that of the voice communications system 10 of the first embodiment shown in Fig. 1.

In Fig. 8, the voice communications system 40 of this embodiment has the voice communications device 11, the Internet 15, and the voice communications device 42.

In Fig. 8, the functions of each component and each signal, to which the same reference character as that of Fig. 1 is given, are the same as those of Fig. 1.

That is, in this embodiment, each component other than the components 40, 42, 46, 50, and 51, and the function of each signal other than the signals DC1, SC1, and SC2 are the same as those of the first embodiment.

A voice presence/absence judging device 51 of this embodiment returns importance as a judgment result DC1 indicating the three-grade "likeness degree to voice presence", not a judgment result DC of binary voice presence/absence, when the device 51 receives a scanning signal SC1 from an importance setting device 47 shown in Fig. 7. Herein, the "likeness degree to voice presence" corresponds to a value obtained as a result of the processing of the voice presence/absence judging device 51, and indicates the height of the probability that voice data contained in a certain voice packet will be voice presence.

However, since the voice presence/absence judging device 51 calculates the "likeness degree to voice presence" according to an installed program, there is no guarantee that its calculation result will completely coincide with a conclusion obtained when the decoded voice output is actually perceived by the auditory organs of a person.

In contrast, "likeness degree to voice absence" is a concept conflicting with the "likeness degree to voice presence", and indicates the height of the probability that voice data contained in a certain voice packet will be voice absence.

When the necessity of deletion occurs because, for example, the queue length has exceeded the higher threshold TH, the packet deleting device 50 of this embodiment receives the importance from the buffer device 46 as the scanning signal SC2, thereafter determines a voice packet to be deleted on the basis of this importance, and carries out the deletion.

Therefore, an exchanged signal, such as the signals SC and DC of the first embodiment, does not exist between the packet deleting device 50 and the voice presence/absence judging device 51 of this embodiment.

In Fig. 7, the buffer device 46 of this embodiment includes the queue length detector 30, the scanning reader 31, a buffer memory 32A, and the importance setting device 47.

In Fig. 7, the functions of each component 30, 31, TH, TL, and each signal PI, PO, C1 to C5 and D1, to which the same reference character as that of Fig. 2 is given, are the same as those of Fig. 2.

Therefore, the difference between this embodiment and the first embodiment is limited to a part that chiefly relates to the buffer memory 32A and the importance setting device 47.

The buffer memory 32A of the two is a FIFO memory basically having the same function as that of the buffer memory 32, and, in addition, the memory 32A functions to store importance M1 supplied from the importance setting